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FOR: TOBACCO INDUSTRY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

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NEW DIRECTION FOR TOBACCO-HEALTH RESEARCH IN '61, SAYS CHAIRMAN OF TOBACCO INDUSTRY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

New York -- Research on tobacco and health will get new direction and emphasis in 1961, the Tobacco Industry Research Committee said today.

Future research will concentrate on trying to determine how lung cancer -- and heart disease -- originate, since years of research have "failed to show that lung cancer can be caused by contact with tobacco smoke," according to Timothy V. Hartnett, chairman of TIRC.

Greater knowledge about the origins of these diseases "should enable science to determine what part, if any, smoking plays," Mr. Hartnett said. "It may be, for example, that smoking merely reflects some characteristic of a type of person who is prone to cancer or heart disease."

Mr. Hartnett noted that "research done by other organizations and individuals also seems to be taking on this new approach."

"The one fact that is abundantly clear from the research done throughout the world is this: While science has learned a great deal, the basic causes of lung cancer -- and heart disease -- are not known. Much more research is needed," he said.

Mr. Hartnett cited several important areas for future research: the possible role of viruses as a cancer cause; constitutional differences between smokers and non-smokers; the role of previous infections, such as tuberculosis; and air pollution.

The TIRC makes grants to independent scientists studying tobacco and health. Grants are determined by a Scientific Advisory Board to the TIRC. To date, the Committee has appropriated $4 million and has awarded grants to 105 independent scientists throughout the country.

(A copy of Mr. Hartnett's statement is attached)

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